

Editorial

There can be few one-make motorcycle clubs whose initial growth has matched that of the Gilera Network. Membership now stands at 79, representing possibly 30% of potential take up. It is a pity that future growth is unlikely to be so rapid.

We have Piaggio to thank for this successful launch and hope that we can continue to enjoy a happy relationship with them whilst establishing our independence.

News on the spares and warranty front is mixed. We hope that the situation will improve over the winter as it becomes clear which dealers are truly committed to Gilera for the future. Thanks to the advertisement for Motodd the GeN will have an extra sheet for the next year.

The 'comic' has featured a few NordWest's for sale in the last few weeks. Presumably their owners have replaced them with an 'M' reg whatever. Unless they have decided to try an RC600 I doubt if they will find their new machines as satisfying as the last !

Plans to pick up alternator pullers, other odds and ends and news of after market goodies were thwarted by the total close down of major Italian cities for the whole of August. I was warned, but found it hard to believe that at least one dealer would not be open in Turin. I got within 30 miles before a small bike shop in Susa confirmed that everything would be 'chiuso'. So please bear with us on the tool hire for the moment.

Early September seems to have slipped to the middle. I am pleased to report that one reason has been trying to decide what to include given the large pile of contributions received !

Now read on

USEFUL GEN

CHANGING THE CAMBELT, CHECKING THE TAPPETS.

NORDWEST/SATURNO/RC600

Gilera recommend changing the cambelt every 12000km, I am sure it would be safe for a bit longer than that but it should not be ignored, it is not expensive and it is a fairly straight forward job, But you or your dealer will need a puller for the alternator and the bad news is that the puller is not common with other bikes. The good news is a pattern puller is available from the Italian firm of Bazzetti via Venhill (the cable people). The pullers are: Nordwest/RC600 38*1.5mm part no:5343. Saturno 35*1.5mm part no:5340. Prices should be around £45 and £35 respectively. If you plan on keeping your bike this one off cost is not that great and is about half a Gilera original. You will also need a spanner to adjust the tappets, I mentioned this in GEN#1 but just to reiterate you need a 10mm box spanner and a medium sized flat blade screwdriver which is long enough to go through the box spanner, because the screwdriver is through the box spanner. You can not use a tommy bar so use a spanner that will fit over the other (non 10mm) end of the box spanner.

O.K. this is what you do:

Ideally support the bike with a paddock stand, axle stands or what have you. Tank off, spark plug out, cam belt cover off, rocker box covers off. Now remove the three screws from the alternator cover, you will probably not be able to pull it off because it is a tight fit so tap it gently around the edge with a hide or nylon hammer, now a little bit of wiggling and it should come off. DO NOT lever it with a screwdriver you will easily damage the machined faces.

The stator is fixed to the inside of the cover so it is quite heavy, tie it to the bike with a bit of string to stop it hanging on the wires. Put the bike in 5th gear and stand on the back brake, this should lock the crank well enough for you to remove the bolt from the centre of the rotor. Screw the protector pad into this thread then screw on the puller. Now rotate the engine (by the back wheel) until the mark on the rotor lines up with the mark on the crankcase (it is at about

make sure it is spotlessly clean, do not kink it and do not use any thing other than your (clean) fingers to fit it.

That's it, now you just put it all back together. The washers behind the rotor go like this: big washer first with its angled edge facing out (away from the pulley), next the two dished washers, one dish in the next dish out so they will squash each other a bit as the rotor is tightened home. Copper slip the tapper, oil the bolt and don't forget the woodruff key, torque to 40 Nm.

Checking the valve clearance is done cold with the engine in the TDC position. It is standard screw adjuster and locknut, as the feeler gauge must be slid under the cam it is easier if you curve them slightly first. It is not possible to tell if the feeler is slack so try to get the next size feeler in. If you can not assume it is OK. Correct settings are: Inlet: 0.05mm. Exhaust: 0,10 mm. Torque locknut 10-12 Nm.

STAINLESS STEEL EXHAUST

I recently had a letter from David Morgan in Wales. He wants to know if there are any after market goodies for the Nordwest. Well are there? I don't know of any but I am sure there will be plenty from Germany so if you know of any please let us know.

David also said that he has had a stainless silencer made by Gazelle in Cardigan, West Wales. Gazelle make one off systems to fit the bike so they need the bike and you need to book in advance as they are busy. I can vouch for the quality as I got a two into one made for my Boxer four years ago and I have no complaints after 35,000 miles. So if you fancy a new exhaust give them a call and have a couple of days away in a very beautiful part of Britain, they can book a guest house for you if you want. A Nordwest silencer should cost around £200. And being all stainless steel inside and out it should last the life of the bike.

Gazelle Telephone or Fax: 0239 841715

SUPER SATURNO 600

500cc Saturno, 600cc Northwest. How long do you think it took for someone to say "how about a 600cc Saturno?" Answer: not very long.

Ian Calvert did a proper works race conversion and I hope we will be able to tell his story later. John Rushworth has fitted a Northwest engine and so has Andy Wallington. Well to be totally accurate Andy fitted a Saturno to his Northwest engine.

It all started one day when Andy went out and bought a black/pink Northwest to replace his aging KLR (wise move). He very quickly discovered this bike had a hell of a lot to offer. A desire to explore the flight envelope (he wanted to go faster) led him to a Track Day..... he was hooked. A year later he had ridden every track day he could get on and had been to the Nurburgring twice, also he had made higher rearsets but was still getting the pegs down. The time had come for a performance boost, but what? WeeVee had a Saturno Rolling chassis, and so a plan began to come together.

The engine went to Slipstream Motorcycles who raised the compression to 11.3:1 by machining the base of the barrel and then re-profiling the piston. They fitted adjustable cam wheels and improved the inlets to accept a pair of Kehin CR 33mm smooth bores. Also they fitted a drive for the Saturno mechanical rev counter.

Next the engine and frame went to Saxon who modified the top frame tubes and tank to clear the twin carbs and then made a two into two low level exhaust, but restricted ground clearance meant this was soon changed to a two into one with a carbon can. Next new tires were fitted. Pirelli Dragons 160/60 rear and 110/70 front.

Five months and the bike was ready to go, six miles later it stopped when the head gasket blew. It blew again a couple of thousand miles later, more torque on the head bolts seems to cure it.

Apart from that problem it has been trouble free and has covered about 7000 miles including three trips to the Nurburgring and several track days in U.K. Now don't go thinking that this is some weekend hobby. It is Andy's only means of transport so during the week it's going down the shops and running around London etc.

Gilera claim 53 bhp at the crank for the Northwest. When Andy Dynojeted the bike it was doing 53 bhp at the rear wheel (a standard Saturno is about 38) and that figure was still climbing fast when it hit the rev limiter, max torque is a constant 361lbs from 4000 rpm upwards.

Andy was at Cadwell Park with his bike where it was ridden by our IOM TT hero Mick Noblet. He said it felt fine and seemed as quick as the Puima he rode to 7th place in the Single cylinder TT. Whats next Andy?!

A DEDICATED DEALER

Since the factory closed, places to get spares and repairs have been a bit uncertain, but I am pleased to report things are slowly getting sorted out. Firstly Fowlers are improving the supply of spares and it will get better as time goes on and they learn what they need to carry in stock. They have years of experience in the wholesale spares trade so they know how to do it and have keenly taken on Gilera.

Every make of motorcycle attracts its own dedicated enthusiasts both owners and dealers. You should all know Bob Wright Motorcycles of Weston Super Mare, they have been a Gilera spares specialist for many years. When the latest range of Gilera bikes came to Britain new dealers were signed up and everything looked rosy, but many of those dealers seem to have lost interest now. However, the new enthusiasts are starting to show their dedication

I want to tell you about Motodd rear of 237-235 London Road, Croydon. Motodd are well established Laverda specialists familiar with maintaining and supplying spares for a marque with its share of problems in Italy. When WeeVee closed Motodd expanded into WeeVee's premises, this gave them the capacity to expand the stores and take on WeeVee's Gilera and Morini spares business; they are now an authorised Gilera dealer fully supported by Piaggio and Fowlers. So if you need spares contact Chris on 081-684-2869. Chris used to run the stores for WeeVee and has a lot of

experience & contacts in the motorcycle spares world. If bits can be got he will probably be able to get them.

Another ex WeeVee name is still there. Phil Smith is running his own business at Motodd servicing Morinis and four stroke Gileras. He has all the Gilera service tools and already has gained plenty of experience through race preparation and routine servicing. You can contact Phil on 081-683-4662. If you have a GFR you may want to make a note of Alex, he is fast becoming an expert and has sorted three seized engines in the last few weeks (see the article in this issue about GFR seizures).

Motodd's involvement with Gilera has to be very good news. These are not get-rich-quick-gone-tomorrow people, they will be there when you need them, so don't forget the name.

FAULTS AND FIXES

THE PROBLEM WITH GFR'S

GFR owners are experiencing problems with the engine seizing.

This is a highly tuned two stroke motor and as such needs a bit of careful handling. The problem seems to start with the radiator which is very large (have a look a 125 Yamaha).

First problem: When the engine is first started the temperature gauge soon rises but after a while the thermostat opens and cold water from the radiator floods in. The sudden cooling is enough to seize the engine if it's going quick at the time.

Second problem: The large radiator means that in normal UK temperatures the engine is operating far too cold and so could be liable to seize even

after a long run.

The solution is to blank off the bottom of the radiator. About half the total area seems to be about right. Aluminium cooking foil is the easiest way of doing this. When you start the engine let it warm for a good length of time, then ride gently for the first few miles, ie: do not use high revs or let the engine work really hard. If you keep an eye on the temperature gauge you should see it drop when the thermostat opens. If this happens before you ride away so much the better. once it is up to temperature if it is obviously running too hot remove a bit of the foil. Please let me know how you get on so I can tell others.

EURO DEMO PARIS

The Motorcycle Action Group and the Federation of European Motorcyclists worked together to organise a demonstration against anti biking legislation to take place in Paris on June 18th. It would be continuing the well coordinated lobby and demonstration strategy of the last few years that has had so much impact on the European Parliament. This demo was planned for Paris because the French government has been responsible for some rather dodgy bits of legislation recently, so we thought we would pop round and remind them that we are concerned about our future.

MAG had arranged a deal for cheap ferry tickets with Sealink which helped ensure that a lot of people went from the U.K. But for some strange reason it turned out mine was the only Gilera that made the trip ...

I packed tent, sleeping bag and clean socks onto the Saturno and set off for Dover to catch the 13:30, I usually travel with P&O because of the MCN special price deal and I found Sealink very scruffy and archaic by comparison. We were each

given a length of rope and left to tie our bikes to the wall (are they called walls on a boat?).

During the crossing some guys were chatting about past exploits "Yeah last time I came to France it was for the Boujolais run, we were in a Reliant Robin, it went great 'til we were nearly back to Calais and the front wheel fell off".

An hour crossing and a one hour time difference meant I got out of Calais at about quarter to four. I hate motorways so I had planned a cross country route that would get me most of the way to Paris without touching a main road, north west France is flat and boring if you see it from the motorways but it gets hilly and beautiful on the local "D" roads. I made slow progress but had a great journey. The weather was getting hotter and hotter, as I got onto the Peripherique the temperature went crazy and so did my temperature gauge. I raced through the traffic as fast as I could and I was very glad to get onto open roads again.

The camp site was on the airfield at Ferte-Alais about 30 miles south of Paris, there was a huge queue waiting to get onto the site, the last hundred yards took me over an hour and it was dark by the time I was looking for a good spot to pitch my home. All the home comforts had been laid on, a huge sound stage with non-stop rock bands, food stalls, drink stalls, leather gear stalls, oh yes and two portable loos, but hey who wants to go to the loo when there's all this other stuff to do. My Friday faded into oblivion at about 3 o'clock Saturday morning, and Saturday proper started slowly at about six, ie. three hours later, to the lament of a thousand exhausts (all in perfect harmony). It was already hot, it was very hot by noon when we were ready to set off to Paris.

Despite rather brief instructions the trip started well with bikes splitting up into small groups. I was with a group of about fifty that seemed to have a definite leader. As we got near Paris we pulled into a petrol station but it turned out no one wanted petrol, the leader was LOST and so were we. I got chatting to a couple of guys then I noticed a woman wearing black Lycra and carrying a large map striding toward us. I adopted a cool pose, she did not seem to notice. "OK who knows where we are?" she asked

holding out the map, our vague pointing and arm waving soon told her we had no idea. Police van pulled in for petrol. She eyed it distastefully, "Oh shit I don't talk to the filth, will you lot look the other way for a bit." She walked reluctantly toward the van. A guy on a Harley with a large flag reckoned he knew the way so half a dozen of us set off. After a while I got the feeling we were going the wrong way, we stopped at a red light:

ME: Hey mate do you know where we're going?

HARLEY: Yep. (He proudly points at a road sign.)

ME: Why?

HARLEY: I don't know.

OH GREAT, He knew where he was going but did not know why.

There is only one thing to do in a situation like this, ask a local. I was soon speeding past the Bastille confident in the knowledge that I was on the right road to get to the demo at Chateau De Vincennes.

Estimates vary but it looks like about 20,000 bikers turned up, there was no trouble of course, speeches were made, people cheered, friendships were formed, everyone had a good time then set off to ride past the Eiffel Tower and back to camp for another evening of merry making. I went in the opposite direction and set off North to an Italian bike rally in Belgium. Don't miss the next exciting episode in this weekend of biking.

BY SATURNO TO THE CZECH REPUBLIC

I had not had the Saturno long before a Camping weekend loomed up, how the hell was I going to get a tent, sleeping bag and me onto such a small single seater. It turned out to be fairly easy, a Triumph tank rack on the seat hump could carry a sleeping bag and I brazed up a frame which I could bolt onto the left side of the bike for the tent, plus a small tank bag and

problem solved. Then I heard about a guy who had been to Czechoslovakia for a bike rally, now that sounded like fun.

Going camping for a weekend was one thing but a two week trip across Europe was something else. I collected everything I needed to take and laid it out on the floor, then all I had to do was work out where to put it. I decided I could do it. Apart from tent and sleeping bag I could take what I was wearing plus clean underwear, a small towel, washing kit, waterproofs, essential tools and a small second-hand camera I had bought specially.

The Czech Republic is not that far away, it's about the same distance as the south of France, so a blast on the motorway with one overnight stop or take one or two days extra and enjoy the countryside. There is some serious countryside to enjoy, either go through Belgium then Germany north of Frankfurt and along the edge of the old East Germany into the Czech Republic to Praha (Prague), or northern France, Black Forest, Bavaria then southern Czech to C.Budejovice and Bruno. The rally I went to was not far from the Slovak border near a town called Zlin. It was a wonderfully organised affair. The local club "The Independent Fourstroke Club" was an illegal organisation until the Velvet revolution; a fact that had not stopped them holding secret rallies since the sixties. These people really care about friendships and biking, they make everyone very welcome.

I have been twice now and I will definitely go again. The Czech Republic is a beautiful country, the people are friendly and the history and architecture amazing. Prague is worth the trip all by its self and deserves several weeks of exploration by any tourist. What ever your interest this country will probably have a lot to offer... Crystal glass, ceramics, Fine Art, Museums, amazing technical and mechanical history, architecture, unspoilt countryside, oh yes and of course Beer.

If you are interested in a trip to the Czech Republic and would like to know more I will be happy to have a chat with you so drop me a line.

✠ David Champion

THE ITALIAN MOTORCYCLE OWNERS CLUB GB NORTHWEST BRANCH

Meet at the SPINNERS ARMS , Lower Adlington Nr Chorley & Rivington on the A6 (Junction 6 - M61) - 1st & 3rd Tuesday of each month from 8pm. Free Sandwiches !
Contact Mike Schofield 0257 481587

'G - Mail'

WHOOOPS ! - sorry for the confusion caused by the layout of the G-Mail in GeN#1. Please note the new layout which seems more 'intuitive'. Letter icon and name panel of writer above their text !

Once again I have included extracts which seem to raise important, interesting or amusing points !

Joanna Heywood

I wonder if you've had any feed back yet, there's a couple of things we've found my head lamp is still continental dip, the only other one I had a close look at was the same, can a unit for here be obtained ? Also do you know of any trouble with the sprocket carrier bearing mine collapsed after 5,000 Km, the bike's just short of 12 months old.

See this issue for head lamp conversion -Ed.

Vince Bennett

First impressions of the RC. It's miles too tall for my short legs but it's sexy - have fallen off already, only while parking it on a windy day, did a lot of damage to a step thru which bit my seat and badly scarred it will have to have it recovered. The RC steers better than the Nordwest and is cleaner at 3½ grand will let you know how we get on.

Frank Guinard

I am the proud French owner of a 1991 pink and black Gilera purchased from WeeVee Plc. I think I can claim it was the only Nordwest with diplomatic plates on it (at that time I was

working for a UN agency). This attracted a lot of interest and suspicion from the police ! I now keep the bike in Monaco where I work part-time. It's better than a Blade on mountain roads between Nice and San Remo, and more practical to go shopping. The bike is perfect if you stay away from motorways where the low power and the small fairing makes distances between petrol stations very long. I suppose the low autonomy was conceived on purpose. One thing you could do for me is to get the guy who designed the petrol tap, I would like to have a word with him ! (me too - Ed.)

Problems:

Leaking fork seals (both !), exhaust pipe looking like a 1955 Liberian tanker after three English winters, tyre wear.. that's not too bad for an Italian beauty.

I found the Pirelli MT60RR that came with the bike are a good compromise, the Michelin TX are better on the dry but offer less low speed grip on the wet. I also like to ride the bike on the trails that run alongside the vineyards in my home country (South West France) where tarmac is a 50-50% business and the Pirellis are perfect for that.

So you guys race Nordwests ! Well why not a lawn mower of my espresso machine ? The Nordwest was designed to make you feel on the edge at legal speed, high CoG, heavy front end etc. You must be brave or I am getting old.

Tips:

In Nice, the Gilera garage is Californie Moto, 2 boulevard de Riquier, tel + 33 93566565. They seem to know what they are doing. They have aluminium silencers from Arrows for 2200 FF (around £250). By the way, can I also have the name of the person in charge of exhaust pipes at the Gilera factory ?

Questions

Has anyone fitted a rear hugger ? Does the paint on the brakes come off like on mine ?

I was surprised to see in the first newsletter that

nobody was complaining about the engine start-up procedure. Starter on, push halfway in and pull again when (if) the engine starts. The positive aspect of the operation is the pleasure of push starting a 150 Kg bike in front of bemused GoldWing owners.

How many Nordwest are registered in the UK ? I counted 7 in Monaco (2 square kilometres).

The Future:

I suggest we all get together to design the NordWest MK2 and commission someone to re-engineer the bike, let's face it in six months time all NordWest will be old. My suggestions are: redesigned rear end with silencer integrated in the rear mudguard (Ducati style), smaller side panels (without the "number plate"), aviation style fuel tap and cap, carbon fibre frame cover (near the footrests).

Simon Mason

I would like to warn all Norwest owners not to fit a U-lock holder behind the number plate. I was told by my dealer that it would be strong enough to hold it. But whilst coming home from the British Superbikes I hit a pot-hole, which snapped off the mudguard from the fender, dropping into the rear wheel, smashing all the back lights, causing damage close to £300 to put right.

Apart from this I am very pleased with my first Italian bike after 7 Japanese bikes. The only fault I have had is a coolant leak from the expansion tank and a screeching clutch.

If anyone in Midlands (Derby,Notts) area is interested in an informal meeting for runs out please get in touch on 0773 713188.

B Pashley

Congratulations on an excellent newsletter ! I saw your bikes at Redgate but as I wasn't on my Nordwest I didn't park alongside. An opportunity missed considering.

We will all miss Benjy's WeeVee and his enthusiasm to motorcycling.

Nigel Windys

If you or any of the members need motorcycle security give us a ring as I am registered with N.U. and can give insurance discounts with N.U.(021 358 3524)

Pip Taylor

I've only had my Nordwest for just over two months, after coming back into "biking" after a lapse of over 15 years. Technology certainly has marched on over the years; and I'm quickly trying to re-establish my old confidence and riding-skills, which are very rusty. Although I'm still "running-in" the potential performance lurking within my Nordwest is a little frightening but extremely exciting.

Ray Webb

I am a proud owner of a Norwest with a leaking head gasket. Have now (late June Ed.) been waiting 9 weeks under warranty for arrival of a new gasket. Have been in touch with every person available to obtain this gasket but have been told there are none in this country.

Now seem to be obtainable: some members advise giving the head bolts a little more torque than standard when you check them and to re-check them every time you do the tappets - Ed.

P J Daffin

As the owner of a new Gilera and as an old fart looking to re-live his youth (with limitations), albeit with new mounts (as opposed to pre-owned machinery in the fifties). I do have severe limitations upon my time pleasure, therefore as much as I would welcome a trip to Cadwell and elsewhere, I unfortunately will be unable to join you this year.

☞ P J Church

I have had the Gilera Saturno for a couple of years now and no major problems to date. Making the puller to replace the timing belt was interesting though. (Any chance of some drawings and a specification ? - Ed.) On that tack I may be interested in purchasing the complete set of special tools so if anyone knows purchase price etc. please let us know. I have replaced the Hi-sports with Metzeler ME1 racing compound 110/70 front 160/60 rear. Superb for the IOM roads.

☞ Franco Lilla

I enclose two photographs of my 'Gilera Saturno Sport' (1952) with my application to become a club member. I bought it eight years ago in Genova in northern Italy after it being expertly restored by the renowned Mr Galanti over a period of one & a half years.

My son owns a 'Gilera G.F.R.' which has not quite 'run-in' yet, but he says it rides like a bullet through country roads !

☞ Christopher Doherty

The other motor cycle club which I belong to has an informal "mutual benefit" arrangement in that mechanics, bike shop owners etc. within the club offer discounts to fellow club members. Had you thought of doing this within the Gilera Network. Of course, it is likely to be less effective within a Nationwide Organisation than within a local club but may be worth considering ?

You may be interested to learn of a warranty claim problem which I am having. I purchased my Nordwest in February from Jack Lilley. On the 1st May I noticed that the off side panel of the bike had a number of cracks radiating from the bolt fixing point. Not having caused this myself, I wrote to Jack Lilley on 5th May to make a warranty claim. To date (26 July - Ed.), the part has still not arrived with Lilley although Ken there tells me that two panels have been

supplied but both of them were in the wrong colours. I hope that this is not indicative of the service which we can expect to receive from Piaggio in the future.

☞ Dave Morris

I found "the Gen" very useful and informative, especially the bit about gear selection, only its 3rd to 4th on mine, which can cause some embarrassment when overtaking ! So I shall be investing in a new pawl, (mine is a post June 93 model) at belt changing time.

The plug cap corroding into a white furry non-conductive blob happened after 4000 Km, an NGK one with the standard "sealing" rubber trimmed to suit done the trick.

I heartily recommend Pirelli dragons on the Nordwest, much nicer than the Michelins which I found (in common with all other Michelins I have used) went "off" before they are worn out, the dragons are just the same when completely shagged as when new, brilliant !

☞ Dominic Chan

I recently sold my Gilera GFR but still have some spares which your readers might want to purchase:

Rear seat cover - as standard - mint condition £20 ?ono.

Tool kit - all new (unused) £10 ono plus postage.

Good luck with your publication - if I'd known sooner about it I might have kept the GFR which was a "luvely" bike to have, but you feel like you're on your own when dealers like Motorcycle City don't back you up when problems happen ! A long story !

Phone : 0983 617392 after 4.30 pm - Work: 0983 402142)

☞ Keith Addison

It was just by chance that I bought the November 93 "What Bike" that featured the

N.W. I soon realised this was the bike for me. Agile, excellent brakes, performance and very important for me not too heavy, it will be even more fun to ride when fully run in.

Incidentally I was quite happy to part exchange a Kawasaki GPX 600.

☞ Ian Carr

I would like to start a discussion on the type of petrol you must use and why ? I have always been told 4 star, is this due to non hardened valve seats ? If its not then why not use super unleaded, which as I understand it has a higher octane rating than 4 star, and therefore should be suitable for the high compression ratio.

☞ Edward Davies

I have a few problems with my Nordwest which is only 1 yr. old and 3,000 Kilometres. First the side stand bolts have lost their thread, and the offside rear indicator is being melted by the exhaust. Has anyone else had the same problems ?

Keep the letters flowing in, if I seem to have edited yours too much my apologies but as you can see there was lots to be fitted into this issue !

✂ Pete Fisher

Thanks to everyone that gave me some feedback on proposals for a membership list.. Most thought it was a good idea with everyone happy with a list giving name, model and area. More detail (e.g. phone number) could perhaps be at the discretion of the individual member.

Nigel Lee suggests that contact could be made initially through the Secretary before putting parties in touch with each other direct. I am happy to do this on a trial basis so long as I don't end up as a kind of Gilera 'Dateline' ! Ian Carr points out that a list giving phone numbers would allow

the questions raised in the GeN to be answered direct to the enquirer without waiting for the next issue. A copy of the answer could be published for everyone's information. He also thinks the list should include any area of expertise relevant to Gilera ownership.

The best idea seems to be a list containing the minimum data for nearly everyone (excluding those who indicated they do not wish their details

MEMBERSHIP LIST

to be held on computer) with additional details as the individual member indicates on the questionnaire you will find enclosed with this issue. Send it back by 31 November and a members list can be sent out with GeN#3 in December.

+ Pete Fisher

Gilera 600 XR-T

When WeeVee serviced the Nordwest they very kindly lent me their XR-T for the weekend. Loosely described as an early RC, this makes an interesting comparison to the Nordwest. It feels much taller (because it is) and heavier, having a

steel 4 gallon (18 litre) plus fuel tank and much bulkier fairing. Visually the engine is the same although a big plastic "bash plate" or engine fairing spoils the appearance. The silencer is of the alloy can type, which at least cuts down on rust, the headers being stainless.

As well as the 'normal' N.W. instruments there was a rev counter and fuel gauge together with large alloy filler cap. All very nice.

I didn't ride the thing off-road, having neither time nor skill, but felt that it would have been capable of more than gentle green laning. The suspension was well set up - much softer as befits something for the rough. Brakes were obviously poorer than the road-oriented N.W., but were still good. Gearing was low, making acceleration interesting. Balance as on my N.W. was brilliant, a really outstanding feature of all these machines. Perhaps it was because the XR-T was six years old, but the seat was far more comfortable (yes - I'm an old softie!) - the rest of the cycle parts being the same as more "modern" Gileras. Annoyingly, the bike was fitted with a handlebar choke lever - annoying

because mine isn't! Mirrors blurred more than on my bike, but perhaps a 15 tooth sprocket and luck come in there.

Riding the bike down the back lanes was fun, the suspension coping well with the undulations and unfinished road repairs that we seem to have to take for granted these days. The dual purpose tyres don't grip brilliantly, and squirm a bit, but its not too worrying. I was riding in early Spring and I suspect the tyres were cold. Only a little weevee at speed on the motorway back to the dealers (sorry!)

The bulk of the tank, coupled with the fairing, gave a good degree of weather protection, whilst still allowing air to get around the "liquid cooled" engine (4 valves) - even in the eighties Gilera were putting lots of stickers on their designs. All in all, a nice bike, but only an

evolutionary step towards the Nordwest, and nothing outstanding in itself. I wonder what an RC is like?

† Chris Webber

WHAT HAPPENED ?

Apart from a small passage in the monthly magazine announcing the end of Gilera, there isn't a lot of information around as to why the bikes that attracted us all so much over the last years have so suddenly been orphaned.

After lusting after a NordWest for over 2 years, I finally scratched together enough money to buy one - I read the announcements and couldn't let the chance pass me by!

Where I live in the Netherlands, every time I park up and at every traffic light, people give envious glances and make appreciative comments. The NordWest has a Type Approval here, as do thousands of Gilera mopeds in NL. Do I pass NordWest regularly ? I do not ! Despite there being a highly active Piaggio network here I don't think any were ever sold or it seems offered for sale.

The same goes for England, no official importation until a few months from the end. So what went wrong ? - a beautiful stylish product built by the charismatic son of a wealthy accomplished parent. All this along with the promise of more brilliant products to come, just thrown away with only the excuse that the company was costing Piaggio too much - shouldn't they have tried to sell a bit more to a world waiting to buy; or was Gilera a convincing tax-loss which died in an Italy having to clean up its act.

Tell us please Piaggio !

† Simon Roberts

Hello from a new member....

Hello to everyone in the Gilera Network! I am the proud owner of a '94 Nordwest, L412TGP. It has covered only 5500Km in this my first year of ownership, mainly due to me saving it for ideal scratching days, the bulk of my biking still being borne by my trusty ol' Kawasaki ZX-10. I am not a car owner! The Nordwest is getting a lot of use at the moment, as the weather is so good, and the ZX is being given the once over internally by those fine chaps at TTS.

I'm no stranger to unusual bikes,

having been one of the few people to own and run a Guzzi Lario. I must admit though, no other bike I've owned has been the cause of so many turned heads and questions from other bikers as the Nordwest. I s'pose I don't have to explain this, or the fun of riding such a completely barking machine to you lot!

It hasn't been a completely trouble free ownership so far, but it hasn't been quite the disaster some people normally seem to expect from an Italian bike.

So far, the Nordwest has suffered a few minor problems, some of which seem to be common, and some not so. I've had long-standing coolant leaks around the front of the engine, which appear to have been rectified by tightening all the hoses and running the bike with the coolant at the MIN level. Logical huh?

Before I fitted the Saturno front sprocket to stop the Nordwest revving to oblivion (in top!) on the way to work, I had trouble with adjustment of the chain. If I set the chain tension about where it should have been, for some reason the rear disc and caliper began binding! Fortunately, fitting the larger front sprocket has removed the need for tensioning the chain by moving the rear wheel back at the moment, but if any of you lot have experienced this problem, or know how to fix it I would be very grateful for the solution. Incidentally, the change of gearing has usefully improved both the top speed and the m.p.g. of the Nordwest in one easy step. The part number for the sprocket is 321586. But be warned, they ain't cheap!

One time, after the bike's first service, I had trouble with the petrol tap. If the

tap was turned to main tank no petrol would flow to the carb. The bike would only run on the reserve setting. This turned out to be due to the guy who serviced it crossing over the pipes on the back of the tap. It's easily done as they are not marked or distinguished from each other in any way.

A couple of other things have cropped up too. The left hand fork leg seal has been weeping slightly, but I've been avoiding looking at it, and also the wires to the parking light have developed a habit of vibrating off. I'm just leaving them off with insulating tape covering the ends for now.

A minor mod I've made is on the cowl behind the headlight assembly. The plastic cowl on my Northwest was rubbing on the speedo/tacho housing, and occasionally falling off. To fix this I removed the offending piece of plastic and trimmed the sides so that there was clearance between the cowl and the the speedo assembly. Also, I removed the fixing grommets, wound a rubber band around each one, put them back in, and replaced the cowl. All fixed.

The only remaining problem is the lack of a stand, so I ordered an Abba Trailbike Stand from Maldon Motorcycles in Essex (tel 0621 854489 if you're interested). This stand locks into the swing arm locations on the frame. Unfortunately the stand fits the mountings, but cannot be operated by one person, and leaves the rear wheel miles up in the air. With the help of my Dad, and my uncle and his engineering shop, the stand is being modified to better suit the bike. If you're thinking of one of these stands,

I'd suggest trying the 'ordinary' motorcycle stand that Maldon M/Cs make.

Anyway, if you're in need of some help in an emergency in the North-East Surrey / South Middlesex area, look me up in the phone book and give me a ring. I'll be glad to help if I can.

Regards,

† Bob Dysart

GILERA SANREMO

Here's a picture of my Gilera Sanremo. Records establish that the bike was made in 1949, towards the end of the Sanremo batch, as the Piuma, with telescopic, was introduced in 1950/51.

It went immediately to Jugauto in Belgrade, the Gilera agent for Yugoslavia. I believe that it was raced throughout the 50s and 60s but I do not think that the engine is the original. Many Sanremos were updated with Piuma engines (which had more extensive finning) or alternatively with tuned Sports engines.

The bike was in a state of disrepair when it was

found by my good friend Gianni Perrone of Rome, the owner of a genuine Gilera 4, imported from Argentina in 1989 or thereabouts. He then sold the Sanremo to me, having restored it. The engine is fragile, plainly having blown up once.

The bike has achieved some fame, having formed the basis of articles on the Sanremo in the Italian mag 'La Moto' and also in 'Classic Racer'. It also features in Hugo Wilson's book 'The Ultimate Motorcycle Book' and in the video 'Man's Quest for the Ultimate Sports Motorcycle' in which it was tested by Wayne Gardner. In fact, he managed to break the rear suspension that day!

The Sanremo was a pukka racer which derived its name, thanks to Motociclismo magazine, from its first victory at San Remo. By comparison, the Competizione, which you saw at Cadwell, was

† Raymond Ainscoe

GILERA NORTHWEST AGE 1 YEAR

Having struck the best deal ever - so goes the line, I went home to think about it ? The dead-line was 5.00 pm - not quite High Noon ! Well, I decided to take the plunge and rang to confirm - one slight problem

Raymond Ainscoe's 1949 Sanremo

more of a race trim sports bike, although the factory produced a batch of about 30 from 1940 to 1946 for its team.

I hope to tell the full history in a Saturno book, from the Competizione of 1940 through to the latest Northwest/Piuma racing efforts, to be published perhaps next year.

(permanent engaged tone). After at least '10 goes', I thought, well here comes Honda again, but at last an answer - of sorts, it was a Newcastle Chinese Take-away ? He, loudly, advised me that Ken's of Newcastle was *** 1793 not *** 7193 as supplied by Ken's. So I ordered it

- sweet + sour fried pork with boiled rice and arranged to collect 1.8.93.

Since my last bike had been removed from my locked garage in a quiet part of Durham, a new lock + chain plus ground lock were installed. Result - a sort of peace of mind and a number of reduced neuroses !! 12 months later all is still well [Datatag + Datatool 50 fitted]

I use 'GILL' regularly (pathetic isn't it ?) with the high point/low point of the the annual meeting arranged with MORINI at Goulceby - also my largest mileage in one day.

DATA

Km/Miles - 7740 Km (4838 m) litres/galls - 360.21 l (79.24 galls) AVE MPG - 61.05 mpg [low 52, high 73]

PETROL - all tried 4 star leaded 4 star unleaded 3 star unleaded (PREMIUM) There does not appear to be any difference to performance or consumption.

RUNNING COSTS

PETROL - £185

SERVICES {850,4000} - £72 INSURANCE - £268 (Norwich Union) *

OTHERS - £47 HEATED GRIPS - £60 (fitted by Ken's)

equated to 13.1 pence per mile.

* NOT THE CHEAPEST but my experience of Landmark would not persuade me to willingly use its services again even though they were cheaper by some £30.

OTHER COMMENTS

No oil was needed apart from the service changes. NO leaks from radiator and coolant remained just above the low-level all the year (Winter/Summer) Chain - lubed with PJ1 lubricant from a can. Still seems OK ! Tyre - rear just below 2mm to be replaced. Cost estimate £100 plus fitting [FRONT OK ?] 8000 Km Service - to be completed in next few days - estimate of £90/100

All in all an excellent 12 months and am currently looking forward to the next twelve months.

† 'No. 9'

NordWest Frontier

The NordWest has been out at two more hills since the last issue of the GeN. Barbon Manor is nice and smooth and features a really fast sweeper as well as a hair pin at the end of a straight which has a speed trap. Speed through the trap was fairly consistent at 77 and the double discs were used to good effect coming up to the hairpin. Getting off the line quickly is still proving difficult. There is so little weight on the back tyre that 'burn-outs' can be performed with ease on a perfectly dry surface even whilst sitting with weight fully on the saddle ! Best time was 33... Difficult to compare it with the Husky as I have yet to get a really dry run there on it. Going on my personal best set on the old SWM, I was about 4 seconds off the pace.

Loton Park saw me almost dumping it at Fallow on braking. The problem is that on the Husky I have to grab a massive handful of brake for this bend which is at the end of a reasonably straight section. There is a change of surface, and I must have forgotten that I was on the 'nordy' because the front wheel locked in a big way and nearly tucked under. There followed much wobbling to the amusement of the other riders who watch at this point, but fortunately things got back under control enough to get round. This first run was the best of the weekend at 70.71. It took the next three runs for the scare to be forgotten. I can usually knock a couple of seconds off my first attempt during a Loton meeting, so in theory a 68 should have been possible. This would be a very creditable performance on a fully equipped road bike as my personal best here is a low 66. I have always liked Loton the best of any of the hills and was clearly beginning to push the NordWest a bit too hard. Lower gearing is definitely called for as I had no need of 5th at all. I shall now revert to the Husky for the rest of the season as most of the remaining meetings are very bumpy and tight. I am still quite keen to give a NordWest a proper go at the hills next season though - watch this space.

The Cadwell track day was as enjoyable as ever, though I must admit to spending more time on the Gilera than the Morini. After several 20 minute sessions I can now see how some people

manage to wear out the rear Hi-sport in the incredibly low milages they claim. It was interesting to compare the smooth Saturno style of some riders with the demon braking and handful out of the slow bits of the NordWest's. Some people definitely seem to have got significantly more urge out of their motors without sacrificing reliability. Perhaps they would like to share information with us on reasonable states of tune (over to you Nigel and Andy). Standard gearing seemed almost perfect for Cadwell and enabled me to keep in touch with Robin Sims on his black 'n pink 'n running a 15 (at least for a while).

† Pete Fisher



I have had only one other suggestion for a Gilera Network Logo. This is from Mike Riley. It would look good on the front/back of a tee shirt with the above design on the other 'side' (in colours as suggested by Pip Taylor). If funds permit I may be able to do a colour insert in GeN#3 to give you an idea of how they both look in colour.

The 'bike' part of Mike's design will also make an interesting footer for letters (see page 5)

Most other responses thought the 'original' logo OK. So if no-one objects I will carry on using these two.



Gileras almost out-numbered Morinis at Cadwell Park on 8th July when we were invited to share the circuit with the MRC.

Paul Hocking arranged for some extra Morini/Gilera road bike only sessions which proved particularly enjoyable. The MRC day rarely gets as many head-bangers as some of the other track days, and everyone got a chance to press on at their own pace in glorious conditions. Several other GeN members came to see the fun and had the chance to watch both Mick Noblett on the TT Piuma and Gary Rowe on his Spondon Gilera in action. As a result of problems neither was going at their usual pace, but both machines sounded wonderful. Raymond Ainscoe had his 1940's Competizione there and Pat Sproston was riding his racing GFR.

It was interesting to compare the smooth lines of the Saturno riders with the demon braking and blast it out of the slow corners technique of the NordWest's. Unfortunately John Rushworth found the ex racer rear tyre on his 'Nordturno' a little unpredictable and high sided the bike coming out of Park to have a pretty spectacular 'off'. Fortunately he was not badly hurt but had to have his wrist put in plaster the next day.

One or two machines certainly seemed to have

significantly more go than standard without sacrificing reliability. Perhaps their owners could share their tuning secrets with us (over to you Nigel and Andy). The 'stoppie' of the meeting award definitely goes to Nigel Windys, as does the biggest 'wheelie'.

members will have the opportunity to acquire back issues of the GeN.

Topics discussed included spares availability (see Where to Go - Who to Know), members list (see page x), honorary membership and contact with Gilera enthusiasts outside the UK. It was agreed that some 'merchandise' kindly donated by Piaggio should be sold to members, with the proceeds going towards the acquisition of alternator pullers and other special tools.

Christmas. Please Santa bring me a 1100 V twin Gilera this year, but I would settle for a 650 NordWest !

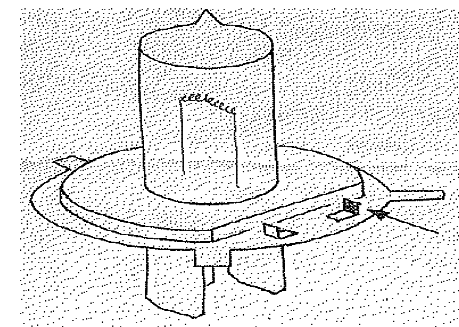
✂ Pete Fisher

GILERA NORTHWEST AND GFR 125 HEADLIGHT MODIFICATION

"Currently, these models come equipped with headlights designed for driving on the right hand side of the road; that is to say that on dipped beam the cut-off is level on the left of the centre-line, and angles up on the right hand side. By making a simple modification to the bulb, the beam can be twisted in a clock-wise direction (looking forwards from the motorcycle) so that the cut-off angles up on the left, and is level on the right. This modification is designed to prevent oncoming vehicles being dazzled, and to provide a superior illumination of the nearside kerb."

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Remove the headlight bulb.



2. Flatten the locating tang which is indicated in the drawing. Leave the other one intact, and of course take care not to touch the Quartz-Halogen bulb glass.

3. Re-install the bulb into the housing, making sure that the remaining tang is located in the slot. Twist the bulb clockwise (viewed from the back) until the tang prevents further rotation.

4. Replace all the other parts removed at (1.), reconnect and check headlight vertical.

Many thanks to Benjy Straw of Piaggio for this important information.

FOR SALE

Stickers , set of four 50 pence (p&p 25p) [note works racer version in short supply !]

Enamel 'stick pin' badges/tie pins , Gilera symbol and name in gold on red - 50 pence (p&p 25p)

Rally dei Faraoni RC600 posters £1.00 (p&p 50p)

Proceeds towards special tool purchase - order from the Secretary.

Nordwest Gazelle stainless steel silencer (see Useful Gen), 3 months old - £170.

Gilera Paddock Jacket, size 42-44, worn twice - £70

Gilera nylon tailored Northwest bike cover, red with 'Gilera' name - offers

David Morgan

Shock Horror - Ducati Leads at the Hairpin!

In all about eight or so Gileras took to the track. I hope that next year we might be able to arrange for network members to enter at MRC member rates, as we certainly helped to boost the income towards what is a very expensive venture for a small club to organise.

The weather was perfect for the whole weekend, making an enjoyable ride for those who came to the Three Horseshoes at Goulceby on the Sunday for an inaugural meeting of the Gilera Network.

Inaugural Meeting

As the meeting was not quorate the constitution and rules remain interim until we can have an AGM. You should all have received a copy of the 'rules' with a membership card. The main point to note is the change to membership subscriptions falling due for renewal on 31 May each year. This makes life a lot easier for the Secretary and Treasurer, and most members joined around June/July anyway. Any new

Has anyone got any bright ideas for a suitable venue for a network gathering next spring ?

An interesting venue to make it worth the trip, plus an accommodating pub at which to hold an informal meeting, all at a reasonably

Spring Gathering ?

central location would be ideal.

A race meeting is a possibility (e.g. May Day World Superbikes at Donnington), or how about the National Motorcycle Museum ?

Party rates could be obtained for those wishing to visit the museum although I am afraid it is strictly British bikes only on display.

Let me know your thoughts and suggestions in time for the next issue.

Closing date for GeN#3 is 31 November. It will be out before

GILERA EXPLOITS ON THE ISLE OF MAN

There have been more Gileras competing on the Isle of Man this year than for many years. Perhaps someone could confirm just how long it is since the last time one was raced round the mountain circuit. How many years have passed between the last 100 mph lap on a Gilera (presumably a four) and Mick Noblett's 100.5 in the 94 singles TT ?

Ilkley Racing Team certainly lived up to their predictions of a top ten place made by Pat Sproston ! Just to finish a race which saw so many retirements from mechanical failure was a creditable achievement. Mick Noblett certainly knows his way round the course having first competed in the Manx Grand Prix in 1978. He has finished fourth in the Senior Manx Grand Prix twice and his fastest lap to date is 113.13 mph on a Honda RC30 in the 1992 Formula One TT.

If it had not been for an oil leak which forced Mick to nurse the Pioma round the last lap an even quicker lap may have been possible. The oil leak seems to have arisen from a cracked crankcase, and it appears that tuning the 558 motor to produce more power whilst retaining reliability is not simply a case of getting the top end sorted out. The Saturno Pioma was one of fifty produced by Gilera in 1990/91 for the Italian Supermono series. It was formerly raced in Italy by Angelo Tenconi of Como. The motor was prepared by Tony Scott and the suspension by Ron Williams.

Sponsors were Rushton & Sons engineers of Bury, Trafford Metal Finishers (Manchester), "Classic Racer International" magazine and Piaggio. In case you don't know, Ilkley Racing Team are Pat Sproston and Raymond Ainscoe (author of "Gilera Road Racers").

Does anyone know how to contact Gavin Lee who road his 'standard' Saturno to 13th place in the Singles TT ? A G. Lee features in the results of Manx Grand Prix races - is this the same rider ? If any one knows where to reach him

please let me know !

Unfortunately Gary Rowe did not fare so well in the Manx on his Spondon Gilera. He certainly caught the eye of the commentator at Glen Helen last year on his NordWest, who thought that he was "as quick through there as anyone".

In 1993 it was valve gear trouble which put him out in the first lap of the Senior. This year the Gilera motor sounded sweet as a nut each time it came round at Quarter Bridge where I was spectating for the Junior race. I felt sure after seeing him round for the fourth time that all would be well. It was not to be - the primary drive "fell off" !

I watched the Senior from the Grandstand - guaranteed to see the bike at least once and able to keep track of progress on the scoreboard markers. All seemed to go well at first, and on the clock a close match was developing against a fairly standard-looking Yamaha 850 TDM. Then the lap position indicator stopped moving. My watch reached the time when I would expect Gary round again. Then the dreaded R board went up. This time Gary was reported off at Kerrowmoar. Not a nice place to drop it, but as he was requesting to be picked up from Ginger Hall he must be OK. Nigel Windys who was helping out in the pits tells me that Gary was 'dicing' with an FZR600, tried a demon overtaking manoeuvre, and ran out of road. He hammered on the brakes and hit a bank. The damage was light enough for him to continue, but he was unable to push start the bike at that point in the right direction (bet he wished he still had the electric start on at that moment!). Still, he had been lapping at around 94 and things look good for next year. Nigel tells me he had a 4th in a singles race at Darley Moor recently. Sorry no photos - perhaps members who have good shots of IoM bikes could send them to me for the GeN#3.

† **Pete Fisher**

**motodd
advert**

WHERE TO GO - WHO TO KNOW

Useful Names and Addresses

ADDITIONS TO THOSE LISTED IN GeN#1

MOTOMECCA

Telephone: 0202-823453
Brembo U.K. Importer.

MIURA ENGINEERING

Telephone: 0494-872233
Marzocchi spares and repairs.

ALF HAGON

350 High Road, Leyton, London E10 6QQ
Telephone: 0181-556-9200
Cast wheel straightening and repair.

B&C SPROCKETS

Telephone: 0522-791369
Pattern Sprockets. Only Saturno rear sprockets
but others may follow.

DELL'ORTO

Telephone: 0734-598955
Any carb. problems they will be glad to help.

NGK SPARK PLUGS (UK) LTD.

Telephone: 0181-202-2151/4
If you don't know, use a DR9EA9 plug in 500 and 600 engines.

SPARES GB

1 Warpole Road, London SW19 2BZ
Useful source of Italian bits and Ferodo pads.

Please let us know who else should be on this list.

† David Champion

PLACES TO GO

September

24-25...Bath	Classic Show
25th...Brands Hatch	Supercup Sound of Singles

October

1-2.....Bolton	Classic Bike Show
2nd...Donnington	World Superbike
16th...Brands Hatch	Battle of Twins

Typical Nordie Rider ? - as featured on Mike Riley's Tee Shirt !

The GeN ISSUE #3

Whats coming in the next issue

- Part two of our riveting tale of a biking weekend in Europe. A visit to an Italian Bike rally in Belgium.
- More Faults and Fixes
- Ideas for Christmas.
- What to look forward to in 1995.
- Road testers 'gems' - what they said about Gileras in the press (why didn't the right people listen ?)
- Your letters PLEASE (especially from any GFR or RC600 owners !)
- Special 'pull-out' feature : Membership List
- Photo page - send in your Gilera shots for inclusion on a high quality photos only page (action shots particularly welcome to make a change from Hill Climb NordWest !)